

WHIP 4 - PERMANENT WILDLIFE PLANTING

FOTG Practice Code 645

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this practice is to establish a vegetative cover of native grasses/forbs that provide wildlife food and cover benefits.

B. PROGRAM POLICY

Apply this practice to establish permanent wildlife habitat on cropland and pasture/hay land consisting of primarily introduced grasses, idle grassy areas, or permanent wildlife openings within woodlands.

C. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for cost share, this practice shall:

- Improve wildlife habitat benefits to an acceptable level.
- Prevent degradation of environmental benefits.
- Be maintained for the expected lifespan of the practice.
- Be included in the approved Wildlife Habitat Development Plan.

D. COST-SHARE POLICY

Eligible practice components for this practice shall be determined needed by NRCS and specified in an approved Wildlife Habitat Development Plan (WHDP). This practice shall be cost shared at a rate to meet the minimal needs of the NRCS Wildlife Habitat Development Plan.

Eligible Components

Minerals

Eligible Seed

Seedbed Preparation

Seeding

Herbicide Application

Temporary Cover (Cover Crop)

Temporary cover will be eligible under one of the following conditions: (a) determined needed until required seeds or plant stock is available; (b) needed because normal planting period for the species has passed and erosion problems may occur; (c) needed because of a soil condition such as chemical residue that will not allow establishment of cover immediately.

E. REQUIREMENTS

The following are requirements for this practice.

1. The seeded area shall not be grazed by domestic livestock for the life of the Long-Term Contract. Native warm season grass stands may be harvested once per year, beginning with the third growing season. Native warm season grass stands may be harvested once per year, beginning with the third growing season. Native warm season grass stands may only be harvested between July 1 and August 15.
2. Herbicides used in performing the practice must be:
 - a. Federally, state, and locally registered.
 - b. Applied according to authorized registered uses, directions, on the label, and other Federal or State policies and requirements.
3. A current soil test is required for all permanent, herbaceous plantings. Lime and fertilizer are NOT required for trees, shrubs, or temporary cover.

F. PLANTING TIMESPAN

Planting or sowing after the WHIP Long-Term Contract is approved by the NRCS Contracting Officer (Area Conservationist) shall be completed as scheduled in the Wildlife Habitat Development Plan (WHDP), unless the producer can provide acceptable documentation that seed stock is not available.

G. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Consider other resources and environmental concerns (e.g., cultural, wetlands, etc.) as prescribed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable laws and regulations when establishing this practice. A TN-CPA-25 must be completed for each WHDP.

H. PRACTICE MAINTENANCE

This practice shall be maintained without additional federal cost share for the expected lifespan of the practice, with the exception of prescribed burns. Prescribed burns may be cost shared after establishment of this practice to rejuvenate native warm season grass/forb mixtures (see WHIP Prescribed Burning practice for requirements), and will not be considered a maintenance practice.

Cost share shall be refunded if either of the following applies:

1. Participant destroys the cover during its lifespan; or

2. Cover fails to provide the desired wildlife benefits during the life of the WHIP Contract, unless the failure is caused by circumstances beyond the participant's control.

I. TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITY

NRCS shall have technical responsibility for this practice.

J. SPECIFICATIONS

Approved Cover Natural Regeneration is acceptable on B slopes or flatter areas (slopes of 5 percent or less). Natural regeneration is acceptable on C slopes (slopes of 5-12 percent), if sufficient ground cover is present to minimize soil erosion and other off-site environmental impacts. With natural regeneration, cost sharing shall only be available for tame grass eradication, temporary cover, or legume interseeding. Substitutions may be allowed subject to prior approval by the WHIP Program Leader or State Biologist.

For temporary cover (corn) with eastern gamagrass, plant corn at a 45 degree angle to the eastern gamagrass rows. Corn should be no-tilled. Plant ten pounds eastern gamagrass about April 1. Apply atrazine for corn, following label directions. Plant early maturing corn about June 1 at a rate of 12,000-16,000 (1/7 bu./ac.) plants per acre. Harvest corn as early as possible.

Requirements Temporary cover is authorized. Corn is authorized as a temporary cover with eastern gamagrass only.

A current soil test is required for all permanent, herbaceous plantings. Lime and fertilizer are NOT required for trees, shrubs, or temporary cover.

Seedbed For conventionally planted materials, a firm seedbed is recommended. Prepare by plowing and disking (or harrowing) and allowed to settle. Prescribed burning (WHIP 10) may be used as a component for site preparation.

Herbicides Apply herbicides in accordance with the label for tame grass eradication or when the no-till method of planting is used.

<u>Eligible Seeds or Plants</u>	<u>Seeding Rates (per acre)</u>	<u>Seeding Dates</u>
Natural Regeneration	Temporary Cover, if needed	
Natural Regeneration with Legume Interseeding:		
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	15.0 lbs.	Apr. 15-June 15
Eastern Gamagrass	10.0 lbs.	Dec. 1-July 1
No-till Corn (Temporary Cover) (12,000-16,000 Corn Plants/Acre)	1/7 bushel	
<u>Tall Grass Mixture (Deer/Turkey)</u>		
Big Bluestem	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	Dec. 1-July 1
Indiangrass	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	
Little Bluestem	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	
Sideoats Grama	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	
Switchgrass	0.5 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	5.0 lbs.	
or		
Single or Mix of	1.0 lb.	
Illinois Bundleflower		
Partridge Pea		
<u>Short Grass Mixture (Quail/Rabbit)</u>		
Little Bluestem	3.0 lbs. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	Dec. 1-July 1
Indiangrass	0.5 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	
Sideoats Grama	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	5.0 lbs.	
or		
Single or Mix of	1.0 lb.	
Illinois Bundleflower		
Partridge Pea		
<u>Broadcast Planting Mixture</u>		
Switchgrass (Cave-in-Rock, Blackwell)	8.0 lbs. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$)	Apr. 1-July 1
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	5.0 lbs.	

<u>Eligible Seeds or Plants</u>	<u>Seeding Rates (per acre)</u>	<u>Seeding Dates</u>
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Temporary Cover – Summer

Millet, White Proso	20.0 lbs.	May 1-July 1
Millet, Foxtail	20.0 lbs.	May 1-July 1
Buckwheat	30.0 lbs.	May 1-Aug. 1
Corn (with Eastern Gamagrass Only)	12,000-16,000 plants/acre	June 1

Temporary Cover – Winter

Crimson Clover	20.0 lbs.	Aug. 1-Oct. 1
Winter Wheat	1.5-2 bushels	Sept. 1-Oct. 20
Cereal Rye	1.5-2 bushels	Sept. 1-Oct. 20
Wheat and Crimson Clover	1 bushel; 10 lbs.	Sept. 1-Oct. 20
Rye and Crimson Clover	1 bushel; 10 lbs.	Sept. 1-Oct. 20

^{1/} PLS = Pure Live Seed